

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 and 6-17 are presently active in this case, Claims 1 and 10 having been amended, Claim 5 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and Claims 11-17 having been added by way of the present Amendment.

In the outstanding Official Action, the drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). Submitted concurrently herewith is a Replacement Sheet which includes changes to Figure 3 to address the objection. More specifically, Figure 3 has been amended to include an exemplary depiction of the principal diffusion direction, as described on page 17, line 3, through page 19, line 9, of the specification. Accordingly, the Applicant requests the withdrawal of the objection to the drawings.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The subject matter of Claim 5 has been incorporated into Claim 1 and amended to recite the "principal diffusing direction," which has antecedent basis in independent Claim 1. Accordingly, the Applicant requests the withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejections.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashita et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,874,902) in view of Ohkawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,746,130). Claims 2, 4, 7, and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Yamashita et al. in view of Ohkawa and further in view of JP 2002-231029. For the reasons discussed below, the Applicant traverses the obviousness rejections.

The basic requirements for establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness as set forth in MPEP 2143 include (1) there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings, (2) there must be a reasonable expectation of success, and (3) the reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. The Applicant submits that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established in the present case because the references, either taken singularly or in combination, do not teach or suggest all of the claim limitations.

Claims 1 and 10 of the present application recite a planar light source unit comprising a light source, a light guide plate having a light incident surface through which light from the light source enters, and a prism sheet for collecting light traveling from the light incident surface to an opposite side surface. The light guide plate also includes a light exit surface through which light exits and an anisotropic diffraction grating formed on the light exit surface or a surface opposite to the light exit surface for diffusing light in a principal diffusing direction along the light incident surface, wherein the anisotropic diffraction grating does not substantially diffuse light in a direction perpendicular to the principal diffusing direction. The Applicant respectfully submits that the cited reference, either when taken singularly or in combination, fail to disclose a light guide plate having an anisotropic diffraction grating, as expressly recited in Claims 1 and 10 of the present application.

The Official Action cites the Yamashita et al. reference for the teaching of a light

guide (3) having a light incident face (31) through which light from a light source (1) enters. The Official Action quotes a passage from column 14, lines 36-57, for the teaching of the anisotropic diffraction grating of the present invention. The Applicant notes, however, that the quoted passage is a discussion regarding the "light deflecting device," which is depicted as reference numeral (4) in the figures and which is cited in the Official Action as the prism sheet of the present invention. The Official Action also cites column 10, line 27, through column 11, line 14, for the teaching of the anisotropic diffraction grating of the present invention. However, the Applicant notes that this portion of the Yamashita et al. reference does not mention an anisotropic diffraction grating for diffusing light in a principal diffusing direction along the light incident surface, and that does not substantially diffuse light in a direction perpendicular to the principal diffusing direction. In fact, the Yamashita et al. reference suggests light diffusion in the XZ plane and perpendicular to the XZ plane. (See, e.g. column 8, lines 49-61, column 9, lines 44-53, and column 10, lines 11-52.) The device of the Yamashita et al. reference achieves the anisotropic diffusion with particles in the prism sheet (see column 14, lines 36-57), not with an anisotropic diffraction grating.

Additionally, the Applicant respectfully submits that the Ohkawa reference does not supplement the deficiencies in the teachings of the Yamashita et al. reference described above. More specifically, the Ohkawa reference does not disclose an anisotropic diffraction grating for diffusing light in a principal diffusing direction along the light incident surface, and that does not substantially diffuse light in a direction perpendicular to the principal diffusing direction.

Application Serial No.: 10/649,688
Reply to Office Action dated April 21, 2005

Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully request the withdrawal of the obviousness rejections of Claim 1 and 10.

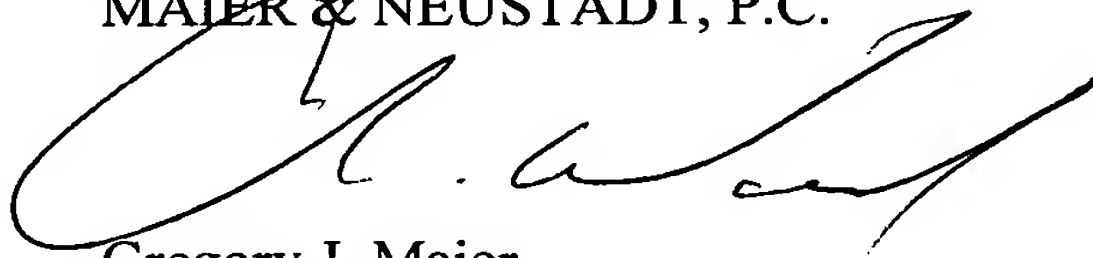
Claims 2-4 and 6-9 are considered allowable for the reasons advanced for Claim 1 from which they depend. These claims are further considered allowable as they recite other features of the invention that are neither disclosed nor suggested by the applied references when those features are considered within the context of Claim 1.

Newly added Claims 11-17 are considered allowable for the reasons advanced for Claim 10 from which they depend. These claims are further considered allowable as they recite other features of the invention that are neither disclosed nor suggested by the applied references when those features are considered within the context of Claim 10.

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Application Serial No.: 10/649,688
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IN THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 3. This sheet, which includes Figs. 3-5, replaces the original sheet including Figs. 3-5.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet